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This publication is prepared for regional specialists in the Washington community by the USSR - Eastern Europe Division, Office of Current Intelligence, with occasional contributions from other offices within the Directorate of Intelligence. Comments and queries are welcome. They should be directed to the authors of the individual articles.

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Sakharov's Prize: The Dissidents' View

The award of a Nobel Peace Prize to Andrey Sakharov appears to be generating a degree of cohesive activism among members of the Soviet dissident community that may give the regime pause, at least over the short term. In the longer term, however, the dissidents' prospects remain grim.

Last week, 37 dissidents of differing philosophical stripes joined in issuing a statement condemning the regime's refusal (as yet unpublicized by Soviet domestic media) to permit Sakharov to travel to Oslo next month for the award ceremony. The dissidents pledged support for Sakharov and charged that the regime's action is proof of its "fear in the face of the unwavering movement of civil thought and morality" in the USSR.

The document is the second public declaration of support for Sakharov and his principles that the dissidents have put out in as many weeks. The first, signed only by a handful of the most prominent names, was made public on October 30, evidently in response to the publication by *Izvestia* of a statement by 72 members of the Academy of Sciences condemning Sakharov and the Nobel Committee.

The declarations, both of which may have been drafted and organized by writer Andrey Amalrik, brought together such figures as reformist, Marxist historian Roy Medvedev, sculptor Ernst Neizvestny, former general Petr Grigorenko, poet Aleksandr Ginzburg, members of the official writers union Vladimir Kornilov and Osip Cherny, and Larisa Bogoraz, wife of writer Anatoly Marchenko. Also among the signatories were Jewish activist Vitaly Rubin and mathematician Vladimir Albrecht. The latter is the secretary of the Moscow branch of the London-based human rights organization Amnesty International--a

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The more pessimistic majority see the Kremlin as willing to use Sakharov's case to make even clearer than before that the CSCE agreements cannot be cited by the West to press for change in Soviet domestic policy. They also point to the Soviet leadership's recent retrenchment on doctrinal issues as an indication not only of pre-congress closing of ranks, but also a reaction to perceived exploitation of human rights by some in the West to sabotage detente. In this atmosphere, the dissidents see their future as dark. (CONFIDENTIAL)



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Romania Sends "Observer" to Swiss Military Maneuvers

Romania has again broken ranks with its East European allies, this time, when it sent an "observer" to Swiss military maneuvers last week. Bucharest apparently wants to demonstrate the importance it attaches to CSCE confidence-building measures and to underscore its determination to resist Moscow's demands for greater conformity within the Warsaw Pact.

Originally, all five Warsaw Pact military attaches accredited to Bern--including the Soviet--indicated they might attend. Moscow had second thoughts, however, apparently fearing it might set a precedent for inviting Western observers to Warsaw Pact exercises. The Soviet attache asked the Swiss, who have long invited observers to their exercises, if they extended this invitation specifically to fulfill CSCE obligations.

The Romanians probably calculated that it was easier to break ranks on the "observer" issue when a neutral state held the exercises. Bucharest may also have felt that Soviet equivocation about attending the Swiss exercises presented a convenient opportunity to be present. Last month the Romanians did not send an observer to NATO maneuvers in West Germany, although there were earlier signs that they would. At the time, a Romanian diplomat noted the "repercussions would be too great," and alleged the Soviets were "twisting arms."

[redacted] later said that Romania hoped for more "national"--not NATO--invitations in the future when "moments were more propitious." He suggested that the West "bombard" the East with as many maneuver notifications as possible in order to get the Soviets to comply. (CONFIDENTIAL NOFORN/ORCON)

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Warsaw Pact Defense Ministers Meet

Communist sources say the meeting of Warsaw Pact defense ministers now being held in Prague is "routine and of no special significance." The two-day session, expected to end today, will probably consider past and future training exercises. The last similar meeting was held in Moscow in January, and the ministers have usually timed their annual sessions for the winter months when exercise activity slackens. The recent meeting of the Warsaw Pact military council in Bucharest was also routine, and set the agenda for the current meeting. (SECRET NO-FORN)



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Polish Party Plenum Due Thursday

The Polish Party Central Committee meets on Thursday to complete plans for the seventh party congress which convenes on December 8. Some changes in Politburo membership will probably be made at the plenum or, more likely, at the congress, but no major alterations in the Gierek leadership or its policies are expected.

Those members of the Politburo most likely to be dropped are Franciszek Szlachcic, who was removed from the party secretariat in 1974 for excessive nationalism and personal ambition, Cultural Minister Jozef Tejchma, and former planning chief Mieczyslaw Jagielski who has lost some of his extensive influence after a severe heart attack.

The plenum will probably focus on how to proceed with raising food prices and coping with the persistent meat shortages that have caused widespread grumbling since early this year.

The Politburo's decisions on these sensitive economic issues will be explained to local party officials, but they will probably receive little if any publicity in the media. (CONFIDENTIAL)



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Czechoslovak Foreign Minister's Tour d'Horizon

Foreign Minister Chnoupek's major foreign policy speech to the Federal Assembly on November 11 was less sycophantic toward the Soviets than his last major parliamentary address on October 13, 1972.

Despite the decreased adulation accorded the Soviet Union in his recent address, Chnoupek paid proper obeisance to the basic tenets of Soviet foreign policy, including the "Brezhnev Doctrine." In short, he said nothing to which Moscow might object.

The differences between Chnoupek's speech this time and his earlier one probably are a result of a growing sense of self-confidence of both the regime and the foreign minister himself. Although Prague has not completely shed the pariah image it gained in the post-Dubcek period, its foreign policy has scored major successes over the past three years. Chnoupek, with some pride, emphasized Czechoslovakia's increasing acceptability, as he ticked off the number of foreign contacts, new international documents, and countries with which Prague has established relations. Chnoupek takes personal credit for the "foreign policy successes" achieved since he became foreign minister in December 1971. In fact, he appears to have done so well that, by some accounts, he is slated to move up into the party presidium.

On balance, Chnoupek seemed to be promoting an image of a sovereign country that follows a co-ordinated foreign policy. His personal style and polish may have made some elements of the address appear newer than they were. Parts of his speech were clearly aimed at the foreign diplomats who were conspicuously invited to attend. His remarks on the implementation of CSCE, foreign trade offices in Czechoslovakia, and the reunification of divided families were deleted in the local press coverage.

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Albanian Purges Have Not Affected
Top-level Hierarchy

The widespread purges that are reportedly sweeping the Albanian bureaucracy have evidently not affected the top party leadership. On November 17, a special session of the People's Assembly met to draft a new constitution. All Politburo members were present, including party chief Enver Hoxha--who is still politically very active despite whatever ailments he may have.

Opening speeches at the assembly session strongly suggest that Hoxha will obtain ratification of the reform measures he had apparently adopted in order to strengthen his own and the party's hold over the government's administrative apparatus and to reduce excessive bureaucracy.

On the eve of the session the party's official paper, *Zeri I Popullit*, published a lead editorial written by Ramiz Alia, the Albanian party's chief ideological spokesman. Alia's ringing endorsement of Hoxha's policies clearly signaled to the party faithful that regardless of their unsettling effect on domestic and foreign policy the recent personnel changes have the endorsement of top leaders. (CONFIDENTIAL)

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